Totakashtaka of Shri Totakacharya

The Totakashtaka has been composed in the Totaka meter, in which each paada (quarter) has four sa-gana's. Here a sa-gana is made up of two short syllables followed by a long one. The hymn naturally lends itself to be set to music. A suggested Raga is (Hindustaani) Todi.

विदिताखिलशास्त्रसुधाजलधे महितोपनिषत कथितार्थनिधे ।
हृदये कलये विमलम चरणं भव शंकर देशिक मे शरणं ॥१॥

O knower of the nectar-ocean of the scriptures, the expounder of the knowledge of the great upanishadic treasure! I meditate on Your pure lotus feet in my heart. O Teacher Shankara, be my refuge. (1)

करुणावरुणालय पालय मां भवसागरदुःखविदूनहृदम ।
रचयाखिलदर्शनतत्त्वविदम भव शंकर देशिक मे शरणं ॥२॥

Save me whose heart is afflicted by the misery of the ocean of births, O (You who are) the ocean of compassion! (By Your grace) make me the knower of the truths of all the systems of philosophy. O Teacher Shankara, be my refuge. (2)

भवता जनता सुखिता भविता निजबोधविचारण चारुमते ।
कलयेश्वरजीवविवेकविदं भव शंकर देशिक मे शरणं ॥३॥

The people have found happiness due to You, who have the intellect adept in the inquiry into Self-knowledge. Make me understand the knowledge of God and the soul. O Teacher Shankara, be my refuge. (3)

भव एव भवानिति मे नितरां समजायत चेतसि कौतुकिता ।
मम वारय मोहमहाजलधिं भव शंकर देशिक मे शरणं ॥४॥

You are Lord Shiva Himself. Knowing this my mind is filled with an abundance of joy. Put an end to my sea of delusion. O Teacher Shankara, be my refuge. (4)

सुकृतेऽधिकृते बहुधा भवतो भविता समदर्शनलालसता ।
अतिदीनमिमं परिपालय मां भव शंकर देशिक मे शरणं ॥५॥

Only after numerous virtuous deeds have been performed in many ways, does a keen desire for the experience of Brahman through You arise. Protect (me who am) extremely helpless. O Teacher Shankara, be my refuge. (5)

जगतीमवितुं कलिताकृतयो विचरन्ति महामहसश्छलतः ।

अहिमांशुरिवात्र विभासि गुरो भव शंकर देशिक मे शरणं ॥ ६॥

For the sake of saving the world, (Your) great (disciples) wander assuming various forms and guises. O Guru, You shine like the sun (among them). O Teacher Shankara, be my refuge. (6)

गुरुपुंगव पुंगवकेतन ते समतामयतां नहि कोऽपि सुधीः ।
शरणागतवत्सल तत्त्वनिधे भव शंकर देशिक मे शरणं ॥ ७॥

O Best among the Gurus! The Lord whose flag bears the emblem of the bull! You have no equal among the wise. You who are affectionate to those who seek refuge! The treasure of truth! O Preceptor Teacher, be my refuge. (7)

विदिता न मया विशदैककला न च किंचन काञ्चनमस्ति गुरो ।
द्रुतमेव विधेहि कृपां सहजां भव शंकर देशिक मे शरणं ॥ ८॥

I have neither understood even one branch of knowledge clearly, nor do I possess any wealth, O Guru. Quickly bestow on me the compassion which is natural to You. O Teacher Shankara, be my refuge. (8)

Contributed by Shri M.S. Ravishankar